

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PEKING 00345 230912Z
ACTION EA-09

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C O N F I D E N T I A L PEKING 345

E.O.11652: GDS
TAGS: ETRD, CH, US
SUBJECT: US TRADE PROSPECTS IN LIGHT INDUSTRY

1. SUMMARY. AN OFFICIAL OF THE LIGHT INDUSTRY CORPORATION PROVIDED AN EXTREMELY FORTHCOMING AND POSITIVE ASSESSMENT OF THE PROSPECTS FOR US TRADE IN LIGHT INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTS. HE SUGGESTED THERE WOULD BE AN UNUSUAL DEGREE OF FLEXIBILITY AT THE CANTON FAIR IN DISCUSSING LABELING, EXCLUSIVE REPRESENTATION, US SAFETY STANDARDS, AND STYLING FOR THE US MARKET. HE STATED FLATLY THAT CHINA WOULD BE BUYING US TECHNOLOGY. END SUMMARY.

2. DURING A LENGTHY CONVERSATION AT A FEBRUARY 22 RECEPTION, LI HAO-RAN, DEPUTY MANAGER OF THE LIGHT INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTS SECTION OF THE LIGHT INDUSTRY IMPORT AND EXPORT CORPORATION, TOLD USLO THAT HIS SECTION WOULD BE INVITING MORE AMERICANS THAN EVER BEFORE TO THE SPRING CANTON FAIR. HE NOTED THAT SHORTAGES WOULD STILL BE A PROBLEM IN SOME LINES BUT THAT THE LIGHT INDUSTRY WOULD LIKE TO USE THE SPRING FAIR TO DISCUSS MEANS OF ASSURING INCREASED SALES TO THE US IN THE FUTURE. AS AN EXAMPLE, LI SAID THAT LIGHT INDUSTRY WOULD BE MORE FLEXIBLE IN DISCUSSING USE OF "PRIVATE" LABELS. EXCLUSIVE REPRESENTATION WOULD ALSO BE CONSIDERED MORE FAVORABLY THAN IN THE PAST, CONFIDENTIAL

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SO LONG AS THE VOLUME WAS SUFFICIENTLY GREAT.

3. LI MENTIONED RUBBER AND CANVAS SHOES AS AN AREA WHERE HE HOPED FOR INCREASES IN SALES TO THE US, NOTING THAT ATTENTION WAS BEING PAID NOW TO DESIGNING TENNIS SHOES IN THE WESTERN STYLE TO FIT AMERICAN FEET. HE SHOWED AWARENESS OF THE PENDING ACTION BY THE PRESIDENT ON IMPORTS OF NON-RUBBER FOOT-

WEAR UNDER SECTION 201.

4. TOYS WERE ALSO MENTIONED BY LI AS A PRODUCT LINE CHINA WANTED TO SELL IN LARGE QUANTITY TO THE US. A US TOY BUYER (THE CRYSTAL CO) WOULD BE HOLDING A MARCH SEMINAR IN SHANGHAI AT WHICH LIGHT INDUSTRY REPS WOULD CONCENTRATE ON US SAFETY REGULATIONS. THE STICKING POINT ON ALL THESE ITEMS, LI CONCLUDED, WAS THE HIGH SECOND-COLUMN US DUTY.

5. LI SAID THAT THE PRC NEEDED US TECHNOLOGY AND WOULD BE BUYING IT IN THE FUTURE.

6. COMMENT: EVEN AMONG THE RELATIVELY OUTGOING OFFICIALS OF THE EXPORT-ORIENTED TRADE CORPORATIONS, LI HAO-RAN HAS ALWAYS BEEN ONE OF OUR MOST OPEN AND POSITIVE CONTACTS. NEVERTHELESS, HIS EXTREMELY FORTHCOMING ATTITUDE IN REGARD TO A NUMBER OF LONG-TIME SORE POINTS IS STRIKING. DESPITE POSSIBLE SUPPLY SHORTAGES, THE SPRING CANTON FAIR WOULD APPEAR TO OFFER A VERY FAVORABLE OPPORTUNITY FOR AMERICAN IMPORTERS TO DISCUSS LONG-TERM ARRANGEMENTS WITH THE CHINESE TRADING CORPORATIONS.

GATES

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